

day evening, when the pastors were at their mid-week services and only twenty members voted (out of two hundred on the roll) one of these men, and without re-examination was ordained, as a laborer in China. Has the "Interior" considered the impropriety of ordaining a young man, without a second examination, against whose doctrinal views a strong protest was pending? And of ordaining him before the Synod had considered the protest? And at a season when many members of Presbytery could not be present?

On October 4, 1909, the Presbytery met again and voted to ordain another of these young men without re-examination. Complaint to Synod was immediately entered. Synod was to meet October 19. Yet the Presbytery proceeded to ordain and install the young man on October 14. Does the "Interior" sustain such an effort to forestall the Synod, and prevent it from considering the matter otherwise than by judicial process?

The reader will ask whether there was good ground for objecting to the ordination of these men? The complaint that was laid before the Synod states:

Second: We complain because the Presbytery accepted as a satisfactory substitute for the proper examination for ordination, the examination for licensure held June 14. This examination showed serious departures from both the Scriptures and the Confession of Faith. The basis of the examination, according to a rule recently adopted by the Presbytery, was a written statement presented by Mr. Black at the April meeting, "embodying his convictions upon the fundamental points of the Christian Gospel." The language of this statement, as to the Scriptures, the person of Christ, the Trinity, the nature and method of salvation and the work of Christ, strongly suggests, if it does not openly affirm, that the writer holds a system of belief in which these cardinal doctrines of evangelical religion and especially of our Confession of Faith are notably absent. Indeed, it seems to be flagrantly opposed to our confessional and Biblical teaching. There is no affirmation in this paper that the candidate really accepts the whole teaching of Holy Scriptures as binding his faith. He does not affirm his belief in the Confessional doctrine as to the Trinity, but rather suggests Sabellian conception of the Godhead. His language as to the Deity of Christ is unsatisfactory and vague, and suggests the view known now as Ritschlianism. Justification by faith and the doctrine of election are wholly absent in every proper sense from this statement, nor is there any statement whatever as to the doctrine of future punishment.

When Mr. Black was examined orally, he explicitly rejected the supreme and infallible authority of the Scriptures as rightly determining his faith. At the first examination he declared that he did not believe either in the Virgin Birth of Christ, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, or the actual physical resurrection of Christ's body from the grave. When further questioned he modified his assertion sufficiently to say that he did not know whether he believed these things or not, although he did not question that they were recorded in the Scripture. This made it plain that he held a view of the inspiration of the Scriptures fundamentally opposed to the assertion of the Scriptures themselves and to the teaching of our Confession of Faith.

Does the "Interior" believe that under such a state of facts any Presbytery ought to ordain a man without a clear and distinct renunciation of his errors, and without a special examination prior to ordination?

The "Interior" goes on to say:

The truth of the matter—which can be established by competent evidence whenever necessary—is on the contrary that the young men demonstrated themselves in such accord

with the Standards of the Church that the Presbytery had no ground for rejecting them. The Presbytery has entered on its records the definite statement that the young men were found agreeing with the doctrines of the Confession of Faith in every particular except that they did not affirm—though they did not deny—the virgin birth of the Lord. They did very positively affirm the doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement as the Standards have those doctrines.

Nobody should pretend to understand this dispute who does not recognize that the complainants in the case are men holding to interpretations of the Standards which the Church has long since explicitly repudiated or tacitly left behind. New York Presbytery is not going ahead to dangerous innovations; its troublesome minority is simply fighting for impossible reactions.

Just here emerges one of the gravest aspects of the case. The Synod of New York did not declare its satisfaction with the views of these young men. It referred the "complaint" to its judicial Commission and the report of the Commission was entered on the records of Synod without discussion—just as a matter of course.

The language of the Commission is guarded. It said:

Second. The Judicial Commission has weighed carefully such facts in regard to the views of the candidates as are before it and has reached the conclusion that while admittedly some of the statements of the candidate, especially in his first examination, are open to doubt, or are positively objectionable and so far forth the complainants have ground for their complaint, yet the modified views presented by the candidate in his second examination and papers filed therewith, form a fair basis for the opinion of the majority that his views conform to the Standards of the Church. On the question whether the examination should be sustained or not the Presbytery is primarily the judge and has decided by a majority vote to sustain it. This Commission does not find sufficient ground to justify a reversal of this decision.

The Synod's Commission declared emphatically that the haste in ordaining the young man before the meeting of Synod does not conform to the spirit of Chapter 9 of the Discipline.

But now the "Interior" asserts that "the young men were found agreeing with the doctrines of the Confession of Faith, except," etc. It declares that the protests and complaint are from "men holding to interpretations of the standards which the Church has long since repudiated or tacitly left behind."

Is this true? Has the Presbyterian Church (North) either "repudiated" or "tacitly left behind" such cardinal doctrines as the covenant of works, the fall of Adam, the deity of Christ, the infallible authority of the Scriptures? We cannot believe it. We do not believe it: not for a moment. But with this editorial before us, how can we avoid the inference that the "Interior" believes that many of these doctrines are repudiated by those whom it represents?

The pastor of Mr. Rockefeller's church in Cleveland, Ohio, says that the crying need of American life today is a ministry that has more outdoor air, more lungs, can run faster, jump higher, box better, walk longer, and make quicker time in a rowboat than other men." Paul says: Bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come.